

Meeting
Section Committee Members of Communist
Party, New York

Advertisements with pictures of Wm. L. Foster, National Chairman of the C.P., Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the C.P., and John Gates, Editor, Worker and Daily Worker, appeared in the D.W. on Dec. 17, 18, 19, 1956, calling on all Section Committee Members of the C.P., New York, to come to a closed meeting at the Jefferson School Auditorium, 575-6th Avenue, N.Y.C., under the auspices of the N.Y. State Committee, C.P., on Dec. 19th at 7:30 P.M. The speakers' subject was "The Crusade To Save the Marxist Press; To Defeat Senate Filibuster Rule 22." (See attached)

Approximately 90 N.Y. Section Committee Members were present; 10 National and State Committee members of the C.P. were present.

Chairman was ^{Frank B. Kelly} ~~Pettis Perry~~ (Negro). Other speakers were Lillian Gates, Max Mack Gordon, and individual members of audience, including one of the owners of the D.W., Charles Handley.

Literature distributed to Section Committee Members included a ten page legal size mimeographed statement dated 12-11-56 giving the majority report of the N.Y. State Committee, C.P., as adopted at its meeting held Dec. 8, 1956, as well as certain amendments to the Draft Resolution. (See attached) These were distributed for guidance and discussion purposes by Section Committee Members at their forthcoming Section Conventions, most of which will be held the first week in Jan. Also distributed were copies of Party Voice, Bulletin of the NY State C.P., Dec. 1956, No. 8, Sixth Discussion Issue; copies of the 16th National Convention Discussion Bulletin, issued by CP-USA, Dec. 10, 1956, No. 3; copies of facsimile Day Letters calling for amendment to Rule 22 to Jacob Javits, Irving Ives, and Richard Nixon. To be sent by Western Union from various locations represented by Section Committee Members present, at staggered intervals; copies of printed cards to President Eisenhower endorsing Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt's (et al) appeal for Christmas Amnesty for the imprisoned Smith Act defendants; copies of Subscription cards to the D.W. and Worker. (See attached copies of all items.) Copies of the Militant, the Catholic Worker, and the AFL-CIO News were given out in front of the Jefferson School prior to the meet.

Alexander Trachtenberg and Albert Blumberg were present.

Chairman Perry informed the audience that the meeting was delayed (it started after 8 P.M.) because the deliberations of the National Committee which had been going on for three days had not concluded until 7:20 P.M. He also stated that he hoped they would not mind the change in the agenda for the meeting. (Originally scheduled as a discussion meeting on the situation in Hungary.) He then introduced Lillian Gates (John Gates' wife) as Legislative Representative of the NY State C.P.

Lillian Gates addressed herself to the Crusade to Defeat Senate Filibuster Rule 22. She stated that they had received a "mandate from the American people" in this "vital struggle" to defeat rule 22; that it (the fight) represented an "important stage in the building of the anti-monopoly people party"; that "unions in the AFL-CIO are circulating petitions against Rule 22; the ADA, the Urban League, the NAACP, are united in this effort to change Rule 22; also liberals in the Democratic Party. Six Senators initially sponsored the move-Humphrey, Morse, Douglas, Neuberger, McNamara, and Murray. Since then Kuchel, Clark, Case, Ives, and Potter

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have joined the fight. All this effort represents a great deal of independent thinking. The shift of the Negro vote to the Republican Party was due to the inaction on civil rights legislation of the last session of Congress." She said the politicians would take warning from this, inferred that the fight on Rule 22 was predicated partially on the Democratic Party's need to recoup its prestige with the Negro vote. She said "We support this effort. The degree of activity that can be generated between now and Jan. 3rd may well determine the outcome of this fight. I have seen the petitions circulating in the Liberal Party and among the Fur Workers. Those will help.

"We have a special responsibility in this state since Ives has announced he will spearhead the fight from this state. For a number of years Ives has had a record of being a do-nothing. However, he is up for re-election in 1958. He has a past record of liberal activity; he was the sponsor of the Ives-Quinn Law but since then he has done little in the Senate. It is our responsibility to make sure he leads this fight because he is an important figure in it. Another is Javits. He pledged himself to civil rights legislations during his campaign but we do not know if he'll even be in Washington on Jan. 3rd. It is especially important that we put pressure on Javits so that he'll participate in this struggle as he should. Nixon could rule in such a way that the question of abolishing Rule 22 could not even come up for debate and vote." She said that this ruling was based on whether the new Congress in effect constituted a new or an old body. Further she stated that "We must get as much expression of our views as possible to Nixon so that he will rule right on this question. If we can succeed in this then we will have made a substantial contribution to this historic struggle."

She then has passed out to the Section Leaders copies of three differently worded telegrams to Nixon, Ives, and Javits calling for amendment of Rule 22. She instructed those present that they should "not send these right after this meeting but rather wait until you reach your own locality. Don't send them all the same day. Revise the text anyway you want to in your own wording. Ask your friends to do the same thing, and their friends, shop members, anybody. Your section conventions will be meeting in the next few days. Notify them of this. I do want to say, comrades, we must not minimize our own activities."

Perry then introduced Eugene Dennis who informed them that before he took up the matters under discussion he wanted to let them know of "certain aspects of the deliberations of the National Committee and the decisions made. The committee has been meeting for three days, and just concluded at 7:15 P.M. This is our last meeting before the national convention. The next is to be held 3 or 4 days before Feb. 9th. These meetings just concluded was of extraordinary importance. First is the statement of Lil Gates on Rule 22 with which I concur; second is the telegram we have sent to Eisenhower today on Rule 22; third is the matter of throwing our full support behind the D.W.; fourth is the question of a series of amendments to the Draft Resolution which represent a modification of the concept of democratic centralism. I touch on these briefly.

"The role of our Party as a vanguard organization was discussed. Certain proposals have been made as to changing the name and form of the Party. It was our decision that there be no change, at least at the present time, but that this matter be deliberated and discussed and examined after the convention for action at some future date. It was our decision that the national leadership, the state, and the local consider this matter further.

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"I am not here to give my point of view, but to report what happened in the national committee meeting. First, its form on the positive side. Already, prior to the national convention, there have been important and welcome changes in the aboveboard membership. There has been the democratization of our Communist Party; sectarianism and dogmatism have been decreased; a new relationship has been achieved between the CP and other Marxist parties; there has been a new approach to the question of realignment and the anti-monopoly peoples' party, the Southern problem and Negro and white unity in the South.

"It was our decision that at the national convention we should strengthen and refresh the leadership of the CP from the national level on down. This is the new role of the CP.

"But also the national committee has detected certain danger signals. The unity of the Party has been impaired and seriously endangered. It was not inevitable that differences had to arise in the pre-convention discussion such as they did, of the nature of a certain polarization of views, a marked political intolerance of opposing views. There has been irresponsible name-calling. Persons have been promiscuously called Fosterites, Gatesites, Stalinists and anti-Stalinists, pro and anti-Soviet-ers, stand-patters and so-called Social Democratic elements. The integrity of members of the national committee has been brought into question. (Smashing his fist down, in a loud voice). This name-calling has been detrimental to the interests of the Party. We have certain responsibilities in this situation which these invectives and name-calling have obscured. Party unity is precious. In the first place our common approach and main political approach is the Draft Resolution. This does not preclude sharp debate, sharp polemics, but, Comrades, our collective opinion and judgement at this late date, is that all of us on the committee and all who are in the Party should strive to put an end to invective and condemn all attempts to such an approach. We want the national convention to be a start and not a terminal point. Everything now in dispute will be resolved at the convention. We want change and unity. The national committee will strive to make certain that there is greater unity on program and policy. We hope the same attempt will be made by the delegates to the sections, county, state, and national committees.

"Another serious weakness is the concentration of the controversy on one or two questions such as the changes wanted in the name and form of the organization. We feel that this has been a weakness and in the process it has obscured other problems in our country and in the world and has even endangered our strategic and tactical line. We urge all conventions to give consideration to these questions.

"Third, with a few honorable exceptions like Minnesota, Washington and a few other localities, has been one of our main casualties—the mass work of the Party. The divisions in our ranks has caused a paralysis in mass work. There is no excuse to perpetuate this state of affairs. The mass line of the Party and the work with the masses is vital. I welcome the decision of the NY State leadership to transform this meeting to the crusade for the Marxist Press.

"Comrades, the other day a comrade spoke to me about Rule 22. He expressed doubt as to the outcome. I said, Whatever the outcome, what is done now will further the mobilization of forces in this struggle and will spur on the struggle for negro rights in the offensive against the Dixiecrats. It will give impetus to the realignment of the Democratic Party and will aid the liberal elements in the Democratic Party.

"Soon you will hear a report on the DM and the Worker. There are some in our ranks who have dragged their feet because of sharp differences with its editorial policy. When I heard that Al Lannon had torn up his

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I heard, I think I said that this edition was not... I spoke recently at a garment workers meeting and I said that it had raised \$1500 for the sustaining fund of the paper. I said no editorial control over the content of the paper. (Laughter) Some changes are needed in our marxist press, but I reject all attempts to impugn its editorial policy. I am against liquidationism in all forms either for the Party or its Press. All progressive elements need the DW. It has an effect on the masses. We must make it a more powerful instrument. I urge you to support favorably the report you'll soon hear from Mack Gordon.

Barry introduced Foster. (Some in the audience stood up, others did not.) Foster stated that "Never has the DW faced as grave difficulties as today. Comrades, we're going through a very important time. Ours is a Communist Party which is a stubborn, hard built party. It is under a pretty serious strain. Some Comrades take a pessimistic view. I'm not of that crowd. We have a lot of disputation, but there are not really factions among us although it approaches that point in spots. In the 20's we had two parties, both collecting dues and with their own journals. Nothing at present happening is on that level. I picture the present discussion as fluid, people changing opinions. I've learned plenty from this discussion. Comrades should discuss, go forward. We've wound up in a sort of split, but there is no split in the CP (applause). There is no organized split.

"Our Party will have a fundamental need for the DW in the years to come. I've never heard of what Al Lannon did, but I join with Comrade Dennis to condemn this attitude. There is great danger in factionalism, in sacrificing unity in the name of some particular viewpoint. I've had spats with Johnny (Gates) to put it lightly, but I've never tried to interfere with the paper. In our eagerness for self criticism we've made a laughing stock of ourselves, systematically played down the importance of our institution. Pride needs to be reawakened. The DW stands at the very forefront of labor journalism in the US. In the old days we used to be proud of the Appeal to Reason and the Daily People, but neither had the effect of the DW."

Mack Gordon then spoke. He stated that the 1957 circulation campaign would be for \$50,000 and that by the beginning of Jan. there must be substantial results. He said the DW was still short of its present goal by \$19,000. He had talked to section organizers who had told him it was impossible for them to talk to others about the circulation of the paper. He said the paper should not be sacrificed to an internal debate in the Party. He said that in the past year for example the DW had dropped in circulation from Nov. 1955 not too much, from 4400 down a couple of hundred, but that the Sunday Worker in that time had dropped from 10,600 to 8300. The projected goal for the Sunday Worker for NY State in 1957 is 5500 and 1000 for the DW the Manhattan lower east side has already brought in some. He asked for a core of workers from the county, section and clubs-200 in all- who would consist of Party members, ex-Party members and non-Party members to work in this group for circulation of the paper. He mentioned a group in Chicago of 8 members, 4 in Party, 3 ex-Party, 1 never in Party who brought in 145 in one year and serviced a route of 1. They meet ever Thursday and /60/ on Sunday morning. He said many are friendly now and can help, the DW is followed in many circles. In Detroit the auto workers are doing great work among the shop stewards. The DW is sold every day there is a Ford Council Meeting, right in front of the building and 50% of the council members buy the paper. It has an impact on developments among the auto workers. The sole contact of some persons is the DW. It is a 'gadfly' and compels liberals to take up the

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cutbacks for issues like Hula 22, the banning of the H-club, etc. Progressives and ex-CP members will read the DE, and the atmosphere is more conducive today for subscriptions. Newsstand sales have gone down due to pressure from reactionaries. Have your people visit these newsstands, police them. We need a Party apparatus around our press, a specialized press group which will spend the whole year around on only this job.

(At this point floor discussion took place - see end of report for this discussion)

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Berry opened the discussion period by introducing one of the owners of the Daily Worker, Charles Handley, who described himself as a "so-called owner". When he said this, Berry said "Oh yes, you are an owner." He described himself as dismayed at the pessimism prevalent concerning the future of the DW. He said he had read it from the first issue, that even though he sharply disagreed with its position recently, it had published his letters. He asked them to imagine the NY Post doing that.

The section leader for the garment workers stated her section had brought in to date \$2000.00 for the DW, \$50.00 at this time and more subs.

Another leader asked for a press club to be formed from the many unassigned members of the clubs.

Comrade Evelyn (probably Weiner) described herself as a critic of the present policy, but said her section expected to bring in 135 subs after its convention in the first week in Jan.

Comrade Rebecca said she supported the policy of the DW, and that with reference to Foster's statement on mass work she thought that this was very difficult at present. She said it was her understanding that from each section one delegate would be chosen for the national convention if 77% of that section had paid up membership, otherwise he could be present but would have no voice, no vote. She said this would rule out a large % of the Party and that in the past 2 years her section had not reached this quota.

Comrade Mann said he was against the 29 who had voted to dissolve the Party and he was immediately and forcibly ruled out of order by Perry. He was very angry but sat down.

A section leader from the Bronx deplored the opposition to the DW policy by the East side and garment workers sections. She said all section leaders were not present.

Another leader spoke on Rule 22, stated that it would open the door on many other gains, in fact it would open up the floodgates since liberal organizations were so active on it. He said he was for Gates' policy. He described himself (he was thin, black haired, young) as having come from the coal fields, that he had been raised as a Catholic for 9 years but had been led to the DW and that it must continue.

A very tall slender older man, bald, Norwegian possibly, section leader for the Upper East Side said he believed that after the convention the editorial policy of the paper would be the policy of the Party.

Another leader said she had been in the Party since 1923 (Comrade Sarah) but that she disagreed with Gates so she could not work for the DW.

Comrade Sophie, section leader from a Manhattan section said she was against the D^W policy.

(By this time many comrades had left—perhaps 25 or so)

Gates then gave his summary and position. (Dennis and Foster had left by then) He pointed out that originally this meeting had been called to continue the discussion on Hungary but that the DW was important so it had been changed. He said what had happened here "indicates that the Party realizes it must unite the movement, press forward as the discussion proceeds on the disagreements. We have permitted ourselves to be deviated in our work by this discussion. Most of what has been said tonight has been in the right spirit, but some didn't take to heart what Foster and Dennis said.

"I want to deal with these questions. No comrade says she disagrees, on the paper must agree with her otherwise she won't support it. Well suppose the paper changes its position. What about the other Communist who would then be angry?"

The Party is deeply divided. The issue of Hungary divides the whole world. The British DW is opposite to ours in its position and in their "Speak Your Piece" column the letters are against their position. This is not a simple matter. How to reject both positions—that is the problem. "Speak Your Piece" does this very thing. Suppose we were in the old days of democratic centralism. Would any of the leaders

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them in opposition be printed? I can assure you we didn't print anything against the line of the paper. Let's add this up. I personally solicited James Allen to write his article. Articles and stories by Ben Davis, Max Foster, Eugene Dennis and Ed Strong have been printed against our position. On the other hand there have been Lester Rodney, Mark Gordon, Allan Rock and Joe Clark. How to return to the "line of the Party" question. When the Nov. 5th editorial was printed it represented the majority opinion of the committee. Foster and Dennis were in the minority and in opposition. Therefore the DW has reflected the line of the national committee. (Someone said 'I hope so.') Gates retorted "I hope not. Some of you Comrades will have to correct yourselves if the DW's line is right and it may be proven to be. The whole world Communist movement is affected. This is a very serious problem. The DW has more in it than just news about Hungary. The whole crux of the disagreement is whether the Soviet Union was justified in intervening in Hungary on Nov. 4th. I agree that mistakes can lead to a bad situation, like the summit meeting.

"Many Communists protested against Lester Rodney's article but they forgot that when we sent him down South he wrote fine articles about the Tenn. and Ala. events. We in the DW have been leading the fight against Rule 22 for weeks, against the H Bomb tests, on the matter of the strontium fall-out in the Sunday Worker. The question of Hungary occupies part of the paper. Foster and Dennis argued against this, but we have the same goal-socialism. Some say you are not a Marxist if you don't agree with that person. We've thrown a lot of Communists out of the Party and today we have to eat our own words. Today we say that what happened then is not so. It was a different kind of movement and Party. When there was a difference of opinion we didn't tolerate it in the past. We didn't tolerate any minority opinion. Tomorrow that minority opinion may become the majority opinion..

"We must tolerate differences. We all spoke tonight. The convention will set the policy but there is room for dissent afterwards, differences as have been expressed in the last six months. I wonder if had other Communists had run the paper whether other opinions would have been allowed(sic). It is one thing to talk here in private. It is another thing to talk to non-Party workers who are hostile to the Party and to the USSR. We have to talk differently to them than here in private. The paper must express views which can reach the Non-Party people. Keep that in mind. The DW reaches thousands by indirection. We want to know how to win friends; we want to unite with other socialist movements. We are working to improve our relations with the NAACP, with the labor movement. The DW is a bridge to these other sources. It is not a Party organ alone. To reestablish it, if it ceased publication, would cost a million dollars. Collapsed folded with a circulation of 4 1/2 million so it a marvelous thing for the DW to keep on as it has.

"Look at the DW, what it will become. We need to broaden the DW and we will do it in the near future. What do I mean by broaden? I mean by this that we want to reach the Non Party people. What will be the reaction when we will have on our editorial staff Non Party workers and writers, if people disagree with the DW now? And we intend to have them too. We must have a broader appeal to the masses of people. Robb Hall left because we could not afford to pay him enough money for his wife and three children. We have hired Abe Magill for the Sunday Worker staff. Si Gerson, once an editor, will be on the Sunday Worker staff. He will bring a broad contact to the Worker which he had in this city, state and the nation. He will play a key role in the broadening of our appeal. We have shifted some other writers to the Sunday Worker which is most important because it has double the circulation of the Daily. It has been inferior in the past because the same staff wrote it in a hurry at the end of each week. There has been an improved Sunday Worker the past two months which we hope you have noticed. The convention will settle all the problems we have at present. I am for the idea of press club. I am against steam roller tactics. We must shift our emphasis."

The New York State Committee, Communist Party, at its meeting held December 8, 1956, adopted the attached statement of its position, as well as certain amendments to the Draft Resolution:

I. a. The vote on this statement was as follows:

25 for report
6 against
no abstentions

b. A minority report was also submitted, which will be available shortly, with the following vote:

5 for report
27 against
1 abstention

II The vote on the amendments is indicated after each amendment attached hereto.

(Both reports will subsequently be circulated in printed form in the coming week.)

12-11-56

I - INTRODUCTION

We approach the 16th National Convention of the CPUSA with the profound feeling that it may mark a turning point in our history. Months of discussion prior to and since the publication of the Draft Resolution have revealed substantial differences in our ranks, in the evaluation of the past, and on questions of program, outlook and perspective for the future. Discussion has probed more deeply than ever before in the history of our movement. This was inevitable. It involves a review of the past decade since re-constitution, as well as an appraisal of major aspects of our work in earlier years. It reflects the deep ferment in the organization and the compelling urge to re-examine all questions of theory, program, policy and perspective in light of new conditions at home and in the world.

Discussion on the situation in the party was organized belatedly by the National Committee. This was also true of the State Committee. Views were crystallized in leading bodies that ultimately found expression in the Draft Resolution without providing an opportunity for the active and timely participation of the membership. As a result, tho we are on the eve of the Party conventions, there are many questions that have not as yet been clearly defined, no less adequately discussed.

We submit this statement of views in the hope that it will contribute to a more fruitful discussion of the basic issues.

II - PARTY CRISIS: NATURE AND CAUSES

It is generally agreed that whatever the doubts in the past that the Party is in a serious crisis as a result of its extreme isolation from the masses of American people and as a further result of the negative impact of the 20th Congress, the revelations of Khrushchev and the recent events in Hungary. The recognition of this crisis is the beginning of wisdom. For our part, we firmly believe that we have the capacity to resolve this crisis, tho it will be a long and difficult process. The depth and seriousness of the crisis is revealed most clearly in the relation of the party to the working class and peoples movement in America. It would be one thing, indeed if our isolation was the product of the ascendancy of reaction and heavy setbacks to the peoples movement; if it was the product of a disorganized labor movement and a decline of militant struggle. This is not the case. The opposite is true.

The peoples movement is growing in strength. Labor is united for the first time in many years... 16 million strong. A powerful movement has been unfolding

among the Negro people with the support of labor and liberal forces around the crucial issue of civil rights. Millions of Americans are beginning to understand that this struggle in the South will determine the future of American democracy. The strength of the labor and peoples movement was evidenced in the '56 elections despite the victory of Eisenhower. A new realignment of progressive forces in our country is under way.

These developments point to the widening gap that exists between the Party and mass movement, hence the need for thoughtful and determined action if we are to emerge again as a vital force in the working class and peoples movement.

The nature and root cause of the errors made by the Party which contributed to this situation are analyzed in the Draft Resolution. We agree with this analysis. We believe that the point of view which ascribes our isolation primarily to the objective situation would bind us to the past and perpetuate this crisis.

We endorse the following analysis in the Draft Resolution:

"The most important mistakes made in the period under review were left-sectarian in character. These left-sectarian mistakes are the main reason for the unprecedented degree to which it was possible for Big Business and its political representatives to isolate the Party."

"To end its isolation and expand its mass work, the main task of the Party today is to overcome completely the influence of left-sectarian estimates, policies and tactics in all fields of work." (Italics, Draft Resolution, Pg. 53)

This process has been under way since the Draft Resolution of 1952 with positive results in many industries and other fields of mass work in our State. This was further advanced following the 1954 Program.

III - FIGHT FOR CHANGE

With this understanding we believe the preconditions for any advance require:

1. That we give a clear-cut and unqualified support to the proposition that we are an independent party of American Marxists dedicated to Socialism whose "only allegiance is to the working class and people of our country".

A major source of our un-Marxist dogmatism was our uncritical reliance upon the Communist Parties of other countries, particularly of the Soviet Union, to interpret Marxism-Leninism for us.

Too often we tended to accept the views of the CPSU and other parties without undertaking to determine whether these views or positions applied to America. Too often we made it easier for the enemy to charge us falsely as foreign agents or lackeys and potential allies to view us as apologists for the Soviet Union.

We stand for the independence of Parties that apply Marxism-Leninism to their own conditions; for the study of all contributions of all Marxists the world over; and

Wrong relations in the past proved harmful not only to ourselves as Marxists. It was not helpful to the Soviet Union. True working class brotherhood demands an independent attitude toward socialist lands - while remaining warm supporters of these socialist countries.

Such independence and critical fraternalism is a major pre-condition for our emergence from our crisis.

2. That we develop a creative approach to Marxism, one which uses the methodology of science as Marx and Lenin used it, and break with the doctrinaire, unscientific methods of the past.

Our theoretical work has been mainly the mechanical fitting of the facts, relationships and traditions of American life into a ready-made doctrinal pattern.

Scientific methodology, as Lenin repeatedly emphasized, requires that the starting point of theory be the concrete study of our nation's history and reality, its economy and its political system in all their complex and rich detail. Marxism-Leninism is the tool which aids us in studying and analyzing our nation's development and conditions.

Marxism-Leninism is a living theory; the use of the dialectical and historical materialist method for "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions".

The theory of Marxism can never be frozen at any moment into universals always and everywhere true. It can never be fixed eternally on the basis of the experience of the working class of one or another country. It does not exist codified in books, but lives only when it guides and is changed by practice - "in the particulars of class conditions and of the concrete peculiarities of history." - Lenin.

A pre-condition for emerging from our crisis is that we "take into account living reality, precise and concrete facts, and not get stuck on the theory of yesterday". (Lenin). Thus our way must be the use of the weapon of Marxism-Leninism, the interpretation and development of this body of theory as it applies to our situation in America.

We endorse the following section of the Draft Resolution (p. 55):

"The principles of scientific socialism were first put forward by Marx and Engels. They were further developed in the imperialist era by Lenin. They were later enriched by contemporary Marxists in many countries. Basing ourselves on these Marxist-Leninist principles as interpreted by the Communist Party of our country, we must learn much better how to extract from the rich body of this theory that which is universally valid, combining it with the specific experiences of the American working class in the struggle for socialism in the United States. The Party must distinguish better between the additions to Marxist theory made by Lenin which are valid for all countries and those specific aspects of Lenin's writings which reflect exclusively certain unique features of the Russian revolution or of Soviet society.

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"Therefore, the Communist Party will have to be bolder in re-examining certain Marxist-Leninist theories which, while valid in a past period, may have become outdated and rendered obsolete by new historical developments. For entirely new and unprecedented problems are emerging today which were never treated by Marx, Engels or Lenin. They arise from the new world situation and its impact on all countries."

3. That we take the necessary measures to strengthen the democratic process in the party and eliminate bureaucracy. To this end we recommend the abolition of the concepts of democratic centralism and monolithic unity. Whether the bureaucratic evils were inherent in these concepts or were the result of incorrect application is not the main issue. What is uppermost is the need to define the nature of the organization as a democratic working class organization with a common ideology which functions on the basis of majority rule and guarantees the right of dissent.

To this end we further recommend that all leading committees shall be composed primarily of representatives elected directly by the next lower organizations in order to achieve the closest fusion of leadership and membership in policy making bodies.

These measures we believe will strengthen the cohesiveness of the organization and its fighting capacity.

We support the concept of a centralized national organization which is guided by a common policy democratically arrived at, together with the right of each District and its subordinate organizations, the counties, sections and clubs to determine policy within their own spheres and within the framework of national policy.

4. These changes in concept must be accompanied by an even more vigorous and consistent effort to reestablish the broadest ties through increased activity in every field. Our whole leadership and membership must be imbued with the need to participate in all struggles to help advance the unity of the labor and people's movements and the building of a new democratic coalition in America.

The fight for peace, civil liberties, the issue around Rule 22 in Congress, the many economic struggles of the trade unions, the need for schools and housing and other social issues call for our full and energetic support.

Yes, we wholeheartedly support these changes. Without these minimum reforms there is a serious danger that the Party will suffer further losses, and deteriorate into a sect. There is little margin left.

Are these changes sufficient? The answer to this question depends on what we determine is our perspective.

IV - FUTURE PERSPECTIVE -- UNITED PARTY OF SOCIALISM

Basing itself on the changed relations of forces which have developed on a world scale during the past decade and a half, the Draft Resolution correctly sets forth a general outlook for the world and for our country which differs considerably from that we have held in the past. It notes that the "prospect has opened up of bringing the cold war to an end and ushering in a new era of peaceful coexistence and competition of different social systems." It also notes that "the possibility exists for the peaceful and constitutional transition to socialism" in the United States. These, of course, are perspectives which can be realized only through powerful struggles by the working class and people's forces in our country and abroad. They are by no means certainties; but the important thing is that they are real possibilities. They define an over-all perspective which our Party must fight to help realize in life.

What do we see therefore the period ahead?

We see the forging, through giant and united struggles of the workers, Negro people's movement and other forces of our country, an anti-monopoly coalition. We believe that a new socialist left will grow out of these struggles and in turn will assist and advance the people's coalition. We believe that the persistent and organized development of Socialist consciousness must proceed hand-in-hand with the forging of the people's coalition.

Will the changes in our Party alone bring about this Socialist movement?

Should we not seek out every possible path for more rapid development of such an organized Socialist movement, even if the immediate perspective of united action is as yet extremely limited?

What is our relationship to this concept of a more effective movement for Socialism in America?

There is one view that bases itself on the idea that the Communist Party remains the only instrument for Socialist transformation of society in America. It rejects the view of the National Draft Resolution that we were wrong in the past in recognizing that other forces for Socialism existed and could come into being. It feels that the Communist Party remains and is the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, though diminished in members and influence and that in time, with changes in the objective situation, it will grow into the mass party of Socialism capable of winning the working class in the struggle for Socialism.

We believe there is, as opposed to the first view, another alternative -- looking to the creation of a broader Socialist movement in our country, or what is referred to in the Draft Resolution as the United Party of Socialism. Without having the blue-prints or the form of such a Socialist party or movement, we think it necessary to begin now to explore, make contact with, seek joint activity with other socialist trends in our nation. We recognize that at this time it would be premature and wrong to attempt to merge the small and relatively ineffective socialist groupings in the country. But we believe that a process of stimulation and exploration would reveal new possibilities, especially in the labor movement which must be the foundation of an effective Socialist organization.

Even now there are many thousands of workers, farmers, Negro people, intellectuals, students, middle class people who have a Socialist outlook, but who will not identify themselves with the Communist Party now or in the immediate future.

We believe that eventually such a movement can emerge as a genuine vanguard in the theoretical and programmatic sense and in terms of mass political leadership.

We do not propose a categorical answer to all the real and challenging questions involved in this changed outlook. We do propose an approach that on the one hand does not negate the old, but on the other provides for the opening of the new.

There are those who argue that such a perspective will result in the liquidation of our Party. We believe the contrary is true - that it provides our members with the historic mission of Marxists - that looks to the development of a union between the Socialist movement and the working class.

There are those who argue that the dissolution of the Party is the prerequisite for anything new. We disagree. We believe our Party has a vital contribution to make in furthering this objective. Furthermore, in the evolution of a new socialist movement in the USA it is possible that the Communist Party may become absorbed in this movement or it may develop cooperative ties with it while maintaining its distinct Marxist-Leninist position.

We believe therefore that a bold approach on this question of perspective and a new broader party of socialism provides the most effective answer to the needs of the working class and of our country and clarifies the role of our organization in this period. It knits the two together. It encourages a positive approach to our past history and its many accomplishments; and to the future history of the working class and socialist movement in America.

V. THE PARTY

In the interest of strengthening the Party and its role in the crucial fight for peace, democracy and socialism in our country, we advocate change of name of the Party and the transformation of the Party into a non-party political action association.

We advocate these changes:

1. Because it will contribute to the struggle for our acceptance and legality among the masses. We do not view change of name and form as gimmicks that will transform our relations. This is clearly not the case. We do believe that it represents the beginning of a process - taking all our changes and reforms into account, on theory and program, on the issues of independence, on internal democracy that in time will help bring about a change in our relationships for the better.

The contribution we will make in the next period in the mass movement will depend in large measure on the efforts we make and the success of those efforts to achieve a greater measure of legality for the organization and its members.

2. Because it represents a form of transition that would facilitate the struggle for a new and broader party of socialism. It would dramatize to masses of non-party people that the position stated in the Draft Resolution that we do not have a monopoly on building socialism is genuine and true and not a maneuver. It would give greater latitude and encourage other forces to come forward and organize for socialism. In effect we are saying by this change we are but one group in America that believes in socialism and we are prepared to make a modest contribution together with you, or independently, in cooperation and sympathy with you, to advance this aim. With this change we will place our movement on a better footing with radical and socialist-minded Americans today. Can this be done within the framework of the Party form? Possibly. We believe however it can be done more effectively by such change. And time is important.

3. Because given these changes and the perspective outlined above on the "United Party of Socialism" we believe there is a greater possibility to maintain our ranks intact - stem the losses in the Party and thereby halt the trend to liquidation. We believe it opens up new opportunity to appeal to hundreds and thousands of former members who dropped, not because of fear, but because of our many wrong policies and undemocratic practices in the past.

In recommending a Political Action organization we wish to make it quite clear that we view it as a Marxist organization that would take an active part in the day to day struggles of the people and propagate its ultimate aims of Socialism. It would be an association of Communists, following class-struggle policies, and based on the working class as the most decisive and progressive force in our country. Its program would emphasize the fight for Negro rights, and seek in every way to cement the alliance of the working class and the Negro people as the corner-stone of democratic advance. And it would seek to rally all other democratic sections of American society -- the farmers, intellectuals and other middle strata -- around the leadership of the working class. The name of our Party would be changed to correspond to this change in form.

We present these ideas for discussion.

We do not consider that these are the only ideas that will solve the present crisis of the Party.

We are also mindful of the fact that opportunity has been lacking for a full discussion on these questions -- hence an unreadiness on the part of many who favor change to decide on what changes should be made at this time. In part this was due to the manner in which it was virtually excluded from the discussion in the Draft Resolution.

Above all we are interested in stimulating the widest discussion on what changes are necessary.

We do believe that these changes and the general perspective outlined here will enable the Party to play a more effective role among the masses in the period ahead, -- a period that will no doubt witness a sharpening of the class struggle on every front.

To conclude. As we discuss our problems, we see a ferment among Communists the world over -- no longer the oneness or monolithic rigidity of position so characteristic of the past.

For our part we believe it reflects a tremendous turning over and re-evaluation of ideas, theories, programs and relationships formerly held sacred and which stultified progress. We believe it is a healthy aspect of the present crisis confronting not only our Party but Communists in other countries as well.

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We will find our way, we are confident, if we keep open the channels of discussion and encourage the freest interchange of ideas.

In this testing period a closer relation has been established between the leadership and the membership than ever before. This must become a permanent feature of our work in the future.

The situation in the Party is difficult indeed.

We present these views as our best judgment on how best to approach this situation and ultimately resolve it.

AMENDMENTS

Considering the central place which questions of perspectives for our Party and its organizational form have come to occupy in our pre-convention discussion, we propose the following resolutions to point up the issues involved.

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That we place as the central duty of our Party strong efforts toward effectuating a regroupment and eventual unification of various Socialist currents in our country. We endorse the general outlook of the Draft Resolution toward the eventual formation of a united party of Socialism as the orientation which should guide our work in the period ahead.

Resolution passed: 30 for, 7 against, no abstentions.

2. That we support the adoption of a constitution at our forthcoming national convention which would guarantee a fully democratic organization based on majority rule and safeguarding the right to participate in the making of policy and the right to dissent. Our organization should be guided by a common ideology and common policies, and by unity of action arrived at through the democratic procedures established by the constitution. The Party would function through one national center with local autonomy, within the framework of national policy, in local matters.

The democratic principles of organization outlined above makes it possible and necessary to discard the concepts of "democratic centralism" and "monolithic unity" without sacrificing effective unity of action.

Resolution passed: 33 for, 5 against, no abstentions.

3. That we consider the transformation of our Party to that of a political action association, guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism as we interpret, develop and apply them to the conditions of our country. It would be an association of Communists, following class struggle policies, and based on the working class as the most decisive and progressive force in our country. Its program would emphasize the fight for Negro rights, and seek in every way to cement the alliance of the working class and the Negro people as the corner-stone of democratic advance. And it would seek to rally all other democratic sections of American society -- the farmers, intellectuals and other middle strata -- around the leadership of the working class. The name of our Party would be changed to correspond to this change in structure.

Resolution passed: 29 for, 6 against, 4 abstentions.